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Item 19 of the preliminary list*
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON
THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO
COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Letter dated 7 June 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit a copy of the official communiqué on Western Sahara issued by the Spanish Government on 3 June 1996. I should be grateful if you would have it distributed as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 19 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Juan Antonio YAÑEZ-BARNUEVO

* A/51/50.

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ANNEX

Official communiqué on Western Sahara issued by the Spanish Government on 3 June 1996

The United Nations Security Council has approved resolution 1056 (1996) of 29 May 1996 on Western Sahara, in which, on the proposal of the Secretary-General, it decides to suspend the voter identification process for the referendum and significantly reduces the strength of the civilian component of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). Nevertheless, it maintains practically intact its military presence for monitoring the maintenance of the cease-fire.

The Security Council has not suspended the Settlement Plan, nor has it abandoned its commitment to secure a just and lasting solution to the question of Western Sahara through the holding of the referendum on self-determination in accordance with the Settlement Plan. Accordingly, in addition to maintaining its military presence, it has decided to maintain a political office in the zone and to request the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to break the impasse in the situation.

The Spanish Government reiterates its traditional position of principle to the effect that the problem of Western Sahara will be definitively resolved only through the self-determination of the Saharan people by means of a free referendum with international guarantees.

The Government expresses its concern at the suspension of the voter identification operation and the impasse in the settlement process, and underlines the importance of maintaining the climate of harmonious coexistence among the peoples of the Maghreb. In its contacts with the United Nations, the parties and interested countries, the Government will insist on the importance of the cease-fire that has been in force since 1991 and on the desirability of a prompt renewal of the voter identification process and the other aspects of the Settlement Plan, and will encourage them to work in a spirit of compromise for the solution of the present problems with a view to the future of the territory and to the peace and prosperity of the region.